



# The Network News

## A Quick Look Ahead...

- Sundays Social Bridge**  
1:30 pm to 4:30 pm  
Millennium Corniche  
Hotel, Khalifa St.
- Tuesdays Beginners' Bridge**  
10:00 am- 1:00 pm  
Reem Island
- Wednesdays Golf Clinics**  
9:00 am  
Abu Dhabi National  
Golf Course
- Sundays Golf Lessons**  
8:30 am/ 9:30 am  
Abu Dhabi City Golf Club  
(See details on page 4)
- Monday Creative Writing Group**  
**Feb 1, 15** 4:00- 5:30 pm  
Café Arabia
- Wednesday Neighborhood Walk**  
**Feb 3** 10:15 am  
Mushrif Park
- Thursday Coffee Morning**  
**Feb 4, 18** 10 am to noon  
Khalidiya Palace
- Wednesday Mahjong**  
**Feb 3, 17** 9 am to noon  
Bocca's, Hilton Hotel
- Monday Book Club**  
**Feb 22** 7:00- 9:00 pm  
1:00- 3:00 pm  
Various locations
- Monday AWN Culture Club**  
**Feb 29** 10:00 am to Noon  
Third Place cafe

## A Message from Susan...

One month into 2016 and our AWN activities are going full-steam ahead. Our Chairs and Coordinators are busy; sharing ideas and developing new activities to keep things interesting

The new addition to our list of Activities is the Creative Writing Group led by our own AWN member, Hilary Pooler. She has some terrific ideas planned. Please see page 3 for more information.

I wanted to let you know Lee Nichols, our Co-President who has led AWN with her kind humor, caring attitude and dedicated leadership, will be moving back to her hometown of Atlanta, Georgia in March. We are going to miss her! Thank you Lee for all your hard work!

I am happy to announce that Carolyn Neubauer, who as Philanthropy Chair strengthened the ties with our charities, has been elected as our new Co-President. We are looking forward to the year ahead! Thank you Carolyn!

We are also pleased to announce that Linda Nagle has been elected as our new Philanthropy Chair. Linda had been serving on the leadership team as our fabulous Secretary, keeping us organized and current. Thank you Linda!

February has some special days. Everyone's favorite is Valentine's Day; "a day to celebrate love and chocolate and the love of chocolate!"\* Another unique day in 2016 is February 29<sup>th</sup> Leap Year Day. Leap Days are needed in order to keep our calendar in alignment with the Earth's revolutions around the Sun. If we didn't add a day every four years, we would lose about six hours (of sleep) every year!

Happy Valentine's Day!  
Susan Foster  
AWN Co-President

\*Quoted from Lee Nichols

## Coffee Morning

**Thursday, February 4** This will be an open coffee morning! Come and enjoy a cup of coffee and time with friends!

**Thursday, February 18** We will have Janet Hassouneh, Founder and Exec. Director of the National Symphony Orchestra and Andrew Berryman, Musical Director and Conductor with the NSO speak on the workings of an orchestra and the Symphony's upcoming events.

**Due to unforeseen circumstances, our schedule of speakers is subject to change.** For more info, please email [morningcoffees@awnabudhabi.com](mailto:morningcoffees@awnabudhabi.com).

## Shukran!

As always, AWN wishes to thank Khalidiya Palace Rayhaan by Rotana for hosting our Thursday morning coffees. We greatly appreciate its welcoming atmosphere, and its dedication in meeting our needs and expectations. Members please remember that Khalidiya Palace offers 20% discounts in their restaurants following our coffee gatherings

## Bridge

Sunday afternoon Social Bridge is held at the Millennium Corniche Hotel on Khalifa street. The cost is 25 AED, and parking will be validated by the hotel. If you want to play, and are not on our email list, please contact us at [bridge@awnabudhabi.com](mailto:bridge@awnabudhabi.com) and we will make sure you are added. We look forward to having you join us!

Beginners can join the new lessons' session that resumed on January 19, provided there is availability. The classes are held Tuesday mornings from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Maximum 12 persons per class. For more info, please contact [bridge@awnabudhabi.com](mailto:bridge@awnabudhabi.com)



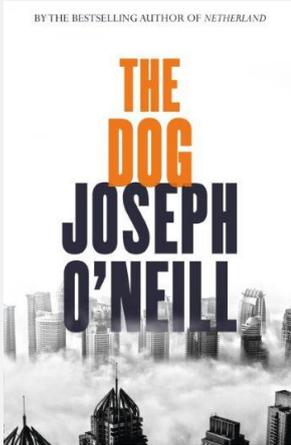
## Mahjong

The Mahjong group plays on the first and third Wednesday of each month from 9:00 am to noon at Bocca's, Hilton Hotel. All levels are welcome including those who have never played and would like to learn. Upcoming session is scheduled for February 3 and 17. There is a cost of 35 AED that includes coffee, water and a light snack. If you wish to be added to the mahjong mailing list, please send an email to [mahjong@awnabudhabi.com](mailto:mahjong@awnabudhabi.com)



## Book Club

The book selection for February 22 is "**The Dog**", by Joseph O'Neill



Distraught by a breakup with his long-term girlfriend, our unnamed hero leaves New York to take an unusual job in a strange desert metropolis. In Dubai, at the height of its self-invention as a futuristic Shangri-La, he struggles with his new position as the "family officer" of the capricious and very rich Batros family. And he struggles, even more helplessly, with the "doghouse", a seemingly inescapable condition of culpability in which he feels himself constantly trapped- even if he's just going to the bathroom, or reading e-mail, or scuba diving. A comic and philosophically profound exploration of what has become of humankind's moral progress. *The Dog* is told with Joseph O'Neill's hallmark eloquence, empathy, and storytelling mastery. It is brilliantly original, achingly funny fable for our globalized times.

Please join us for an enjoyable time with lots of good conversation. Bring your opinion! Afternoon group meets from 1:00 – 3:00 pm, and Evening group meets from 7:00 – 9:00 pm. Please RSVP at [bookclub@awnabudhabi.com](mailto:bookclub@awnabudhabi.com) stating "afternoon" or "evening" in the subject line. **LOCATION DIRECTIONS WILL ONLY BE SENT TO THOSE WHO RSVP.**

## Creative Writing Group



Starting Monday **February 1**, the AWN Creative Writing Group will meet at the Café Arabia from 4:00 to 5:30 pm. You don't have to be a closet poet or the next Margaret Atwood to join - or even 'a writer'. This group is for everyone who enjoys writing in any form and wants to expand their skills. Each session will explore different aspects of storytelling - character, vivid description, structure - with the aim of getting everyone scribbling. So whether you simply want

inspiration to get started, or are already writing and want to share your work with a supportive audience, please contact Hilary Pooler for more information and to sign up at [writing@awnabudhabi.com](mailto:writing@awnabudhabi.com)

## Neighborhood Walk

There is a Walk and Lunch on **Wednesday February 3** at Mushrif Park. We are meeting at 10:15 a.m. to explore this interesting park and then have a set menu lunch at the Mushrif Park Cafe. Admission to the park is 5 AED and the lunch is 75 AED. To get on the list and to get the menu choices, please email: [explorers@awnabudhabi.com](mailto:explorers@awnabudhabi.com)

## AWN Culture Club

The next Culture Club meeting is Monday February 29. The topic will be jewellery with a focus on ethnic and tribal jewellery. We will meet at The Third Place Café at 10:00 am. For more details, please email Izabella Sluzek at [explorers@awnabudhabi.com](mailto:explorers@awnabudhabi.com)

## Golf

Wednesday clinics resume at Abu Dhabi Golf course on February 3, 2016. The clinics begin at 9 am with a one hour lesson followed by 9 holes of golf. A cart, water, and cold towels are included, with coffee or tea provided after play. Cost is 210 AED (Abu Dhabi Golf Club and Saadiyat Golf Club members pay 110 AED). These sessions are limited to 14 players with a minimum of 4 required by the club. Sign up is determined by whoever responds first to weekly emails. If you are interested in booking any of these events, please email us at [golf@awnabudhabi.com](mailto:golf@awnabudhabi.com) or sign up at the AWN Coffee Mornings.

Our 8 week Sunday golf lessons started on January 24, 2016 at the Abu Dhabi City Golf Club. Lessons start at 8:30 am for intermediate and advanced levels, and 9:30 am for beginners. There will be another group at weekly lesson beginning in April, so please continue to check the website and the newsletters for more information. For more details, please email [golf@awnabudhabi.com](mailto:golf@awnabudhabi.com)

## Museums and Heritage Areas of the UAE, by *Izabella Sluzek*

The UAE may be an Arabian desert, but it certainly is not a cultural one, given the richness and diversity of its cultural life. You may, however, need to be a little proactive to find the necessary information on the must-see places the country has to offer. Although the Louvre AD, the first universal museum in the Middle East, is yet to open, history and culture buffs can already enjoy some interesting smaller museums scattered all across the Emirates.

Sharjah alone has seventeen museums, of which my favorite are the Islamic, Archaeology, Arts, Heritage, and Maritime, to name just a few. The largest and most prominent is the Islamic Civilization Museum occupying the landmark golden-domed building, originally erected to accommodate a traditional souq. Although its collections somewhat pale in comparison to the Islamic Museum in Doha, it nevertheless takes a visitor on a memorable journey through the history of Islamic art - as illustrated by over 5,000 artefacts displayed in the museum's seven galleries. In addition, the museum stages Islamic-themed exhibitions brought in from other world-renowned museums (e.g. Vatican, Berlin's Pergamon) once or twice a year.

The very-well-presented Archaeology Museum tells the story of the UAE's land and people before the arrival of Islam. The Heritage Museum, on the other hand, located at the heart of the Sharjah Heritage area, introduces the visitor to the various aspects of traditional Emirati life. This includes, among other things, clothing, customs, jewellery, weapons, houses, children's games and medicine. The museum is only three years old and very family friendly.

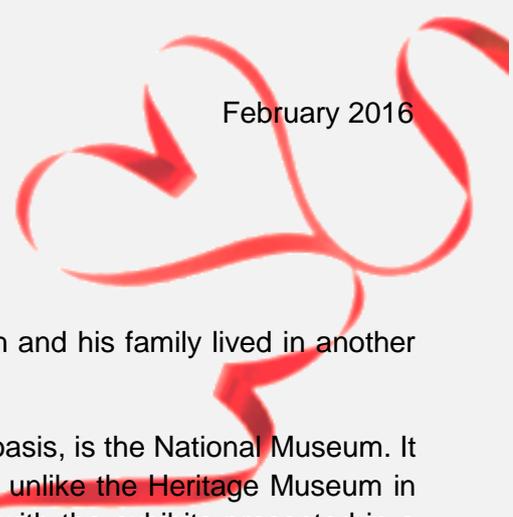
The nearby Art Museum, in addition to frequently displaying the Sheikh's collection of Orientalist paintings, also showcases local artists and stages special exhibitions. The most recent one was on the short-lived COBRA avant-garde movement active in post-war Europe.

The Maritime Museum is ideal for those who enjoy all sorts of boats, from a small *shasha* made of tightly tied bundles of palm fronds to huge ocean-going wooden dhows. It also has a very good pearling section.

Moving on to Al Ain, all of its museums are housed in old forts, including the National and Palace Museums, the newly-opened Qasr Al Muwajji, and Al Jahili Fort. This last one has a permanent exhibit of

the photographs and objects related to Wilfred Thesiger and his Beduin companions' crossing of the Empty Quarter between 1945-50. This venue is particularly fitting, as on his arrival in Al Ain, Thesiger was invited

The information in the newsletter is provided by the American Women's Network of Abu Dhabi as a service to its members. AWN takes no responsibility for the information provided. Please confirm all details with any of the organizations and contacts listed.



by its ruler, Sheikh Zayed, to stay in the Jahili Fort. At the time, the Sheikh and his family lived in another large fort which has since become a charming Palace Museum.

Just a short distance away from the Palace, across an adjacent date palm oasis, is the National Museum. It showcases objects closely related to the traditional Emirati way of life, not unlike the Heritage Museum in Sharjah. However, the former is much older than its Sharjah counterpart, with the exhibits presented in a slightly old-fashioned way that nonetheless should not put you off from visiting. It also houses a very good archaeological section of artefacts from around 3,000 BCE to our era. These were uncovered in the course of archaeological excavations carried out from 1959 on the territory of the UAE by various international teams.

Moving on to Dubai, on the Creek, housed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Al Fahidi fort sits the Dubai Museum where the city's story captivatingly unfolds itself through modern media and life-size dioramas. Not far away, there is an important Bait Al Banat Women's Museum the AWN has already visited several times in recent years.

In addition to the above-mentioned more popular museums, each Emirate has its own heritage museum that usually occupies the premises of the ruling family's old fort, vacated when the family moved into a new palace with modern facilities.

Although forts and palaces are indeed abundantly scattered all over the UAE, they are especially numerous in and around Al Ain as well as northern Emirates where they perch at the foot of the Hajar Mountains overlooking the sea.

Both the oldest fort and mosque in the UAE are located in Fujairah. The fort was erected in the 17<sup>th</sup> century by the Portuguese and still looks imposing, even if slightly crumbling. On the other hand, the enchanting 15<sup>th</sup> century Al-Bidaya mosque's architecture is so unique that it resembles no other structure in the country.

The UAE has also embraced a theme of open-air museums called heritage villages. Such villages can be found in Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, Dubai, Fujairah, Hatta (which is my favourite) and probably in other places. Their purpose is to recreate a traditional Emirati village with its characteristic multi-purpose stone or *arish* houses, a well, mosque, etc. They may be located on the sea as in Abu Dhabi, or within an old fort in the

mountains as in Hatta, sometimes with resident craftsmen or live-in animals. They are always well worth a visit.

Unfortunately for us, very few archaeological treasures of the UAE are open to the public. One exception is the wonderful Hili Archaeological Park in Al Ain. It is a family-friendly green area, complete with benches and a children's playground, designed around the 5,000 year-old settlement's foundations and tombs. It is truly an ideal place for a family picnic on a lovely winter day. A similar place, but smaller and not quite as green, is the comparably old Umm-an-Nar Tomb in Mleiha, located at the foot of Jebel Faya in Sharjah.

In conclusion, the above-mentioned places are by no means a complete list of the museums and cultural attractions in the UAE, but they are amongst the most important ones without a doubt.

## Become a "Friend of AWN"

We are starting a new initiative called 'Friends of AWN'. The idea came to us as we were thinking about all the amazing talent within our membership. We have come to understand how many of you would like to give some time to help AWN develop and grow in its aim of fostering cross-cultural friendship and activities. So we hope to arrange some meetings, two or three times a year for those of you who would like to volunteer just a little of your time and feel you have something to offer. No long term commitment is needed! Our wonderful 'Sadeeqas' (friends) already do this by helping out on the Newcomer Tables from time to time..... There are so many skills our organization could use: people skills, computer skills, organizational skills, commercial skills, creative skills.....Inevitably our leadership team changes over time as people move on, and we are keen to foster new talent! It just needs you to feel it would be fun and fulfilling to volunteer a little of your time to help AWN continue to grow. We would love you to become an "AWN Friend". Our first lunchtime meeting will be February 8<sup>th</sup> at the home of our Guide Book Coordinator. You can register your interest by dropping us a line at [philanthropy@awnabudhabi.com](mailto:philanthropy@awnabudhabi.com) So, please, come and join us.

## Introducing Sharon Irwin, who recently joined our AWN Explorers' Team, in her own words...

My husband, Drew, and I have been in Abu Dhabi for about a year and a half. This is our fourth expat assignment. We have been so fortunate in the places that we have been able to call home. Our 'home' is Calgary, Canada but the expat life has taken us to London, Aberdeen and Melbourne. Yes... Drew works in the oil patch!! We have three lovely daughters and our family is growing as our oldest daughter is married to a wonderful man and there is another wedding this summer. I feel so lucky to have found AWN. The picture was taken at the Falcon Hospital where I went on my first Explorers Group outing. I met people on that trip who are still my closest friends in Abu Dhabi and now I help plan Explorer events with a great team of people. AWN has been a really important part of my life in Abu Dhabi and I want to say a big thank you to everyone who helps and participates!



**AWN Neighborhood Networking Lunch on January 12, 2016 And Explorers' Blue Souq trip in Sharjah on Monday February 25, 2016**

